

Mitigation for Wastewater Facilities

We treat wastewater to protect public health and the environment. As our population grows, a new wastewater treatment plant called Brightwater is needed to serve north King County and south Snohomish County.

Brightwater mitigation will protect the region & the neighborhood

The wastewater system is designed to protect the environment in the region, but there will be adverse impacts in specific local areas caused by the construction and operation of Brightwater. As a good neighbor, King County will use the environmental review process to identify what those impacts will be and develop solutions, called “mitigation,” that will be built along with the treatment facilities and will protect the community. Our goal is to construct a regional facility that enhances quality of life, not just in the region, but in the local area where the facility is sited, and the King County Council has determined that mitigation will be worth at a least 10 percent of the project costs.

Mitigation can take many forms

A look at wastewater facilities around the region and around the nation shows that many different things can be built with them, depending on local circumstances. In some areas, parks, nature trails and wetlands surround the facilities. In San Francisco, a zoo is built on top of the treatment plant. Sport fields, education centers, community meeting space, fire stations all can be built as part of wastewater projects. Wetlands, wildlife habitat, near-shore tidal zones can be restored, protected and enhanced, on-site or off-site. Buildings themselves can be designed to blend in with the landscape or the neighborhood or they can make a bold architectural statement.

The community and the environmental impact statement (EIS) will help decide

It is too early to say what mitigation for the Brightwater treatment plant and conveyance facilities will be needed. The mitigation should address the identified impacts caused by the treatment facilities. King County is developing an EIS to identify the impacts and possible mitigation measures. The Final EIS will be released later in 2003. We are also holding design workshops with communities around the alternative treatment plant sites so we can better understand what types of mitigation people prefer. This information will be considered by Brightwater designers and architects and by local government agencies that issue permits. People will have opportunities to comment on mitigation plans as they are further developed.

Permits from local governments and others will determine what is built

The local city or county, if the area is unincorporated, as well as the state and federal governments will issue permits for Brightwater. These permits will specify the mitigation that must be built along with Brightwater to meet the community’s needs. People can comment directly to their local elected officials and help shape this process.

For more information on the Brightwater Project, please call 206-684-6799 or 1-888-707-8571, or visit the project web site at <http://dnr.metrokc.gov/wtd/brightwater/>.

This information is available in alternative formats
206-684-1280 or Relay Service 711